

have chosen to champion. That is why I come here tonight to take a few moments and ask America not to forget our heroes and not to forget the heroes in this war on terror.

On June 28, my community in Tennessee lost a son when Sergeant James "Tre" Ponder's MH-47D helicopter was shot down by enemy fire in eastern Afghanistan. Tre, his wife Leslie and their two daughters, Samantha and Elizabeth, live in Clarksville, near Fort Campbell, where Tre served at the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Airborne. Tre's parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Ponder, Junior, reside in Clarksville. And Leslie's parents, Mayor and Mrs. Tom Miller, reside in Franklin, Tennessee. They are all constituents of Tennessee's Seventh Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, a military family lives with the kind of stress most of us cannot comprehend, especially in times like these. Tre and Leslie and their families lived with this stress, and they did so with grace and courage. If you want to know why America is strong, you only have to know people like the Ponders and the Millers, and that is why we have to be sure that all of us stop and honor Tre's life and, in so doing, honor our men and women in uniform.

I want to read a statement Leslie made about Tre. This is what she said, and I am quoting, "Tre spent the majority of his Army career supporting a unit he loved. The 160th was like a second family to him. He believed firmly in the principles ingrained in him from an early age: Loyalty, perseverance, and an overwhelming sense of patriotism. Tre would want to be remembered as someone who died the way he lived, providing support for some of America's finest young men."

Mr. Speaker, in the midst of this agonizing loss, Leslie has issued a statement recognizing Tre's service and reminding us all that it was his dedication to America and our soldiers that gave him the courage and strength to do what he had to do, what he felt called to do.

God bless our military families. They are absolutely incredible men and women. Mr. Speaker, medals and commendations alone cannot capture all that Tre meant to our community or what he did for America. The Nation has awarded him the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star medal. Medals and awards only tell us what we already know, that Tre Ponder was a brave and good man, one of the finest.

To Tre's wife, Leslie, and his daughters, Samantha and Elizabeth, we offer our tears and our thanks. We are so sorry for their loss, and we are thankful for their service and sacrifice.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear

hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.

CAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, last year, during the 2004 election season, the Republican leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the most powerful Republican in the Congress, in the House or Senate, promised that this Congress would vote up or down on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. December 31 rolled around, and there was no vote.

Majority Leader DELAY again promised earlier this year there would be a vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement by Memorial Day. Memorial Day came and went, and there was no vote.

Majority Leader DELAY, again the most powerful Republican member of this body or the other body, again promised there would be a vote on CAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, and he promised it prior to the July 4th break. Again, July 4th came and went, and there was no vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

Now, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) says there will be a vote before the end of July up or down on the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

There is a reason that Congress did not vote on it by December 31, did not vote on it by Memorial Day, did not vote on it by July 4th, and still has not scheduled it for a vote even this month. That is because there is strong bipartisan opposition to the Central American Free Trade Agreement. It is Democrats on this side and Republicans on that side. It is business leaders, small business leaders especially, and labor unions. It is religious leaders. The Catholic bishops in Central America and other religious leaders, Lutherans, all kinds of Protestants, Catholics and Jewish groups, all kinds of religious groups in America that oppose this.

Environmentalists, food safety advocates and people who think the Central American Free Trade Agreement is not working and does not work for the United States of America and does not work for the five Central American countries and the Dominican Republic; they understand we do not want this CAFTA. We want a new CAFTA. We want to renegotiate CAFTA so it will work for small farmers and ranchers, for small manufacturers in my State of Ohio, in Cincinnati and Dayton and Portsmouth and Chillicothe. They understand that this was a trade agreement that was negotiated by a select few for a select few.

Sure, Mr. Speaker, there are people that support the Central American

Free Trade Agreement in addition to Majority Leader DELAY and President Bush. The pharmaceutical companies love this agreement because they helped to negotiate it. As I said, it was crafted by a select few for a select few, and the drug industry is one of the select few. The insurance industry loves CAFTA. Again, it was crafted by a select few, the insurance industry and a few others, for a select few. The banks and the other financial institutions love CAFTA. It was negotiated by a select few, and they were at the table, for a select few, for them and a few others.

The largest corporations in the country, many of them like CAFTA because it was negotiated by a select few for a select few, not for small manufacturers in Akron, Ohio; not for small manufacturers in Steubenville, Ohio; but for large corporations that can move their production overseas and exploit cheap labor.

When you think about it, the major reason that Americans are opposed to the Central American Free Trade Agreement in every poll you look at and that a majority Members of Congress are against CAFTA is, look what has happened with our trade policy in the last 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, I am joined by my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCARELL), who understands this so very well, and my colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) will be here in a moment. If you look at 1992, the year I just happened to run for Congress the first time and get elected, in 1992, our trade deficit was \$38 billion. That means the United States imported \$38 billion more than we exported. We had a negative trade balance, import versus export, of \$38 billion. Last year, our trade deficit was \$618 billion. It went from \$38 billion to \$618 billion in the space of 12 years. It is hard to argue we should do more of the same.

CAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, is a dysfunctional cousin of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA passed here in 1993. Look what happened. Then PNTR for China and a whole host of trade agreements as the trade deficit got worse and worse and worse and worse. It has clearly not worked for our country.

Let's look back for a moment at CAFTA to see what has happened. Thirteen months ago, the President signed the Central American Free Trade Agreement with the other six countries, five in Central America and the Dominican Republic. Every other trade agreement the President signed was voted on, Morocco, Chile, Australia, Chile, and Singapore, was voted on within 60 days of the President's signature. CAFTA was signed in May of 2004. It has been more than 13 months, six times plus, six times longer than any of these other trade agreements. Again, because Americans and their congressional representatives, and that is why we are called representatives,